

Diocese of Calgary and Saskatchewan

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BISHOP YOUNG'S**Missionary Tour Through the Diocese of Saskatchewan.**

(CONTINUED.)

Standing out on a promontory which overlooks a lake-like reach of the Churchill River is a building of cathedral proportions. I had often heard of this fine church, but it exceeded my expectations. Possibly it owes something to the fact that being situated in the heart of such a wilderness, it breaks like a vision on the traveller's eyes; but it is in itself a fine structure and of noble proportions. The ridge-pieces must be about 40 feet above the floor. The Church has evidently been constructed on plans brought from England and the architectural features, pointed Gothic, have been carefully maintained throughout. The building consists of chancel and nave, with aisles and clerestory. The tower opens out into the nave by means of a high Gothic archway and this is surrounded by a smaller one opposite the window on the outside of the tower filled with stained glass. The space beneath the tower is fitted up for a Baptistery. The corbels in the wall-plate are richly carved. From these ornamented spandrels support the roof. Beams running parallel with the church, truss the corbels. They are unique in design, and highly carved. The whole building recalls accounts one reads of the fine old timber churelies in the interior of Norway. It was erected about forty-five years ago by the Rev. J. Hunt. He and his devoted wife still live in the memories of the older people. At this point the Christian Indians gather from long distances at Christmas and Easter and whenever the Bishop or superintending Missionary visits the district. On the evening of our arrival (Saturday) we held service by the dim light of candles which hardly illumined the deep recesses of the church. A large and attentive congregation consisting of men, women, and children, filled the seats in the nave. After shortened Evening Prayer in Cree, with hymns, I gave an address. On Sunday morning the church was again full service consisting of Morning Prayer to 3rd. collect, then my preparatory address, followed by the solemn rite of Confirmation, 21 Candidates being presented. After this, assisted by the Archdeacon and the Rev. R. McLennan, I administered Holy Communion to about 80 Communicants. The service throughout was in Cree. Nearly the whole population assembled again for afternoon service. It was very pleasing to mark the interest the Indians take in their church. The Church-yard graves and tablets are kept scrupulously neat. I may remark here that throughout the country our Protestant Indians never omit family prayer morning and evening, but, owing, I consider, to the lack of books and Gospels in large syllabic characters, reading is not sufficiently general among them.

Another short service with address given by Archdeacon Mackay was held on Monday morning, after which I parted from the latter with regret, he returning to Prince Albert from this point, I commencing my further journey in a S. Easterly direction. The Indians throughout his district look up to the Archdeacon. He has won their confidence and his influence over them is quite patriarchal. He is also thoroughly master of the Cree language. It is from this district that a considerable number of the pupils are drawn for the Indian Industrial School, in connection with Emmanuel College. Perhaps this Institution may be said to be uppermost in his interest and affection. He gauges aright the importance of training the growing generation.

We soon bid farewell to the Churchill River on its way to the Hudson's bay. The mouth of this river with its natural rock-quays and deep water channel will one day become an outlet for the vast grain fields of the North West when Canada ceases to dabble in expeditions to prove the practicability of a route which has long been demonstrated old-fashioned sailing ships, and, grasping the fact that this is the shortest route to the great grain market of England and Europe, sets to work in earnest to avail herself of this Canadian "Archangel."

We now passed through narrow channels, with vistas of larger sheets of water to the right or left, these again widening out. So intricate was the net-work of water-ways that one realized how hopelessly one could be lost among them without a guide. Still further, our way lay through a chain of charming lakelets, each embosomed among rocks adorned with pine or graceful birch-trees, the dull red of the rock giving a warm tone to the music drawn over its surface by lichens, mosses, ferns and trailing creepers. Each lake empties itself by cascades and water falls into the next. In one of these channels, our Indians pointed out to us an old rock-painting. The oldest man in the district said, that this had been there beyond the memory of the aged people of his youth. Red earth had doubtless been the material used. On the under side of a rock that overhung the water a conventional figure, viz. a bit of Indian heraldry "depicted a wolf with snarling jaws," reared upon its hind legs: over the head was painted a device—a half crescent with an indicating arrow. On its right side was what might be intended for a fox or a dog, also standing on its hind legs. There was no inscription, Presumably the whole design represented the art of the "powakun" or familiar spirit.

To be continued.

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